

Francesca Lofante, Esquire, Lynn Kapitan, Elizabeth Burns  
Farmington Probate Court, One Monteith Drive, Farmington, CT 06032

Over the past few years a lot has been said about the Probate Court system. It's been called antiquated and out of touch. It's been referred to as a national disgrace and predatory in the pages of our local newspapers. What all of this hyperbole fails to address is the everyday life in a probate court.

What is missing from the current debate is the human element inherent in the structure of the probate court. A live person answers the phone. We work with the public in person. Hearings are scheduled within promptly. Decisions are rendered without excessive waits. And our judge travels to a nursing home, a hospital, or to a person's home. Few will argue that some degree of change is coming. The change is inevitable given the difficult financial times facing the state as well as the changing nature of probate court matters. However, when deciding what shape this change will take, the human element must be retained and the best of the system must be preserved.

As the staff at the Farmington Probate Court, we have seen the best and worst in people. It should go without saying, that when a person appears at a probate court – it is rarely for a positive event in life. Someone has died. Or a person is suddenly unable to care for him or herself. Or a child has been left on a grandparent's doorstep. People come to our court because they are driven there by need. No one wants to be here. Our success stories rarely have picture perfect endings. But through creative use of local resources a person is able to remain at home and live independently or a child is removed from a dangerous situation or families are re-united after facing illness.

Thank-you! Thank-you! Thank-you!!

Dear Evelyn,

I just wanted to send you an update on our family, and take the time to thank-you from the bottom of my heart. Due to the decisions you made back in July of 2007, I've had the opportunity to dance with my dad for the first time in my life! My dad had the pleasure of dancing with his youngest granddaughter at her wedding! He celebrated Christmas, Easter and many birthdays with us! He went to 2 Orioles games! He also made several trips to Virginia!

Most likely, my dad would have died last year had not you and several others gotten involved and allowed him to come to Maryland to live with my family and me. I am deeply indebted to ALL of you!

This has not been an easy endeavor, but it HAS been SO worth it! The memories I now cherish are ones I may NEVER have gotten the opportunity to experience. I just wanted to take the time to be sure you know the effect of the decisions you made back then, and to encourage you to continue on in your work for better, stronger families. Thanks again! Feel free to share these pictures and letter with whomever you choose! May God continue to bless you and yours!

Sincerely,

Lisa Lowe

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